

PLT Meeting News from October 21st, 2009

Our Extended Early Release began with staff development surrounding the new Teacher Evaluation Tool. Mr. Chappell introduced this new evaluation framework to the staff which included a brief overview of why the new evaluation tool was created. The staff was then given an opportunity to ask questions as well as pose some questions to be taken back to the senior administrators at the county level for clarification. Each month we will be engaged in additional segments of the training as we get ready to embark into 21st Century Learning.

Highlights from PLT Discussions:

Kindergarten: The Kindergarten Team began their discussion with a presentation by the Academically Gifted Teacher, Mrs. Rice and how she could provide support for the students in their classrooms. She shared with them the KIT materials that each classroom has, and how to use these materials to help differentiate the instruction for students performing at or above grade level. The team then discussed the Quarter 2 Math Assessments and the procedure for obtaining copies of these from Mr. Saeva. They discussed ideas for ordering objects from smallest to largest. They generated ideas for teaching students attributes of objects to compare and contrast them incorporating the properties lessons they introduced earlier in the year.

1st Grade: The First Grade Team discussed the progress of several students in their classrooms. They evaluated the effectiveness of the interventions already implemented to help improve academic performance. They also discussed the use of additional interventions such as Fast Forward, Great Leaps and SRA Reading Mastery. They will continue to monitor each child that they have identified as struggling to make sure the interventions tired are making a positive impact or if additional modification and implementation of interventions is necessary.

2nd Grade: The Second Grade Team discussed the use of “Science Notebooks”. “Science Notebooks” are used to actively engage students in the scientific process. Students plan experiments focusing on the desired outcomes, make observations using journaling and drawing, and then analyze their outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of the process. Several examples were shared of what can be done through “Notebooking”, including promoting higher level thinking skills and scientific knowledge and application tied to the specific unit of study.

3rd Grade: The Third Grade Team identified a specific objective that they wanted their students to show proficiency in over the next week. The team would like their students to show proficiency in sequencing events from third grade biographical texts. They hope that student will be able to apply higher level thinking skills to their work in an effort to analyze and evaluate the events in the text to improve their comprehension. They will assess progress towards proficiency using oral response, common assessments, and graphic organizers. They will provide enrichment and remediation through small group instruction and extension/remediation activities.

4th Grade: The Fourth Grade Team discussed the progress of students that they have previously discussed during “Kid Talk”. They examined the effectiveness of the interventions that they have implemented to improve student performance. They also developed some “next steps” in an effort to ensure that proper supports were in place to help children succeed academically. They will follow up with the Exceptional Children Team, the intercession teacher, and the parents of the struggling children. They also identified the students that need hearing and vision screening updates so that they can rule out possible causes of low academic performance.

5th Grade: The Fifth Grade Team discussed the desire to use this year to improve their Math and Reading instruction by focusing on the effectiveness of the lessons, how engaging the lessons are, and how much problem solving is involved in each lesson so that they can provide students with opportunities to use higher level thinking skills. They hope to accomplish this by using PLT time to plan interactive lessons drawing on the strengths of their peers. They plan to bring their Math materials to the next PLT to begin planning for the upcoming month.

Exceptional Children: The Exceptional Children Team discussed how to best support the instruction that is taking place in classrooms around the school. It was suggested that the entire EC Team convene with an individual grade level once a week so that the entire team can be available at one time to answer questions or discuss the children that they see together as well as the interventions that they have put in place to improve the child’s academic performance. It is through this collaboration they hope to provide each child the opportunity to feel successful and ultimately be successful.